

## Prematurity (AK 16 -USDA 142)

### Explain to Participant

You're enrolled in the WIC program today because your baby was born premature. Infants born more than 3 weeks early may be at risk for nutrition problems including immature sucking, swallowing and may not be able to digest their food very well. Premature infants need more calories, vitamins and minerals for rapid growth.

### Goal

The goal is to get your baby to grow by providing him/her the best nutrition possible. Breastmilk is the best food for your baby. If it is not possible to breastfeed your baby, work with your health care professional to choose a formula to meet your baby's needs.

### Suggestions for Reducing Risk

Follow the recommendations of your infant's health care provider.  
Attend all recommended check-up appointments with your child's health care provider.  
Refer participant to a Registered Dietitian (RD).  
Explain the nutrition education materials suggested.  
Offer breastmilk or iron-fortified formula for the entire first year.  
Explain infant feeding cues and practices.  
Feed your baby on demand.

Nutrition Education  
Material Suggested

### Breastfeeding your Premature Infant

### Explain Applicable WIC Foods

WIC Foods	Nutrients Provided
Iron Fortified Infant Formula	Protein, Calcium, Vitamins A & C, Iron
Iron Fortified Infant Cereal	Iron
WIC Juice	Vitamin C

### Explain What the WIC Nutrients Can Do for You!

<b>Calcium</b>	Keeps bones healthy. Helps muscles work. Helps blood clot. Helps control blood pressure.
<b>Iron</b>	Carries oxygen in your blood to your muscles. Prevents anemia. Prevents infection.
<b>Vitamin C</b>	Helps your body heal. Helps fight infections. Helps your body use the iron in the foods you eat.
<b>Protein</b>	Makes up part of every cell in your body. Builds and maintains muscles and other tissues.
<b>Vitamin A</b>	Helps keep your skin healthy and smooth. Helps you see at night.

### Materials with More Information

Bright Futures for Infants  
Gaining and Growing website <http://staff.washington.edu/growing/>